2026

Community Meeting Attendance Plan

KERN COUNTY SHERIFF'S OFFICE

KCSO Community Meeting Attendance Plan

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I. Background

KCSO is committed to improving community policing efforts by collaborating with the Sheriff's Community Advisory Committee (CAC), integrating community policing practices and 21st Century Policing concepts into policies, increasing transparency, accountability, and working to enhance relationships with the community.

To that end, KCSO has developed this Community Attendance Plan to meaningfully engage with both the CAC and other community members. This plan will provide guidance on the number and types of events to be attended on a regular basis and take into account the need to enhance relationships with various groups within the community, including, but not limited to, youth, LEP and LGBTQ+ individuals, and communities of color. This plan will also seek to ensure a variety of sworn personnel continue to actively attend community meetings and events. This plan will also provide guidance on convening community engagement forums in a consistent manner, whether they range in size from large community "town hall" type events to smaller, more intimate gatherings, or involve representatives of various department units on particular issues. By providing a variety of events, KCSO and community members will be able to share perspectives and learn from one another on a variety of topics, increasing the likelihood of constructive dialogue and collaboration.

II. Methodology

The Kern County Sheriff's Office has dedicated itself to facilitate a variety of community engagement forums throughout the five (5) response areas throughout the County of Kern. The community engagement forums will be held as follows:

- A minimum of two (2) per year, per each response area:
  - Metro – Metropolitan Patrol (4 Zones)
  - North – Buttonwillow, Delano, Glennville
  - South – Frazier Park, Lamont, Taft
  - East – Mojave/Boron, Rosamond, Tehachapi
  - Northeast – Kern Valley, Ridgecrest, Walker Basin

- A variety of sworn personnel shall actively attend and meaningfully participate in these forums. Personnel in attendance should include representatives from various units, including but not limited to: Command Staff, variety of Patrol Deputies, Internal Affairs, Detectives, and other Specialized Units.
  - When feasible, the personnel attending should vary from each meeting to allow for increased opportunities to engage with different audiences. Deputies from various shifts should attend these meetings. It is important that each meeting be attended by different patrol deputies. All efforts will be made to not have the same deputies attend

each meeting.

- A strong emphasis should be placed on patrol deputies attending in that specific area where the meeting is being held, due to the frequency of interaction with the public. This will be accomplished by having meetings in different areas throughout the county.

- Efforts shall be made to collaborate with CAC in collaboratively facilitating these meetings

KCSO will strive to hold community engagement forums in conjunction with relevant topics that may be of interest to the public. Each section Lieutenant and patrol Commander of each response area will be responsible for scheduling meetings in respective response areas. Although this Community Attendance Plan is designed to afford flexibility, offering a Community Engagement Dialogue style meeting as the first meeting of the year in each area will help in identifying potential topics to be addressed in follow-up meetings later in the year. Whenever possible, such plans should be made in advance to allow for the reservation of venues, deconflict with meetings in other areas, share limited resources, and provide the community with advance notice.

Once meetings are scheduled, it is equally important to conduct outreach though various outlets to inform the public. This outreach can include but is not limited to:

- Issuing press releases through media outlets
- Utilizing the KCSO social media platforms to advertise
- Posting meeting information on KCSO website
- Place fliers at popular community locations (gas stations, grocery stores, meeting halls, other high traffic community areas). Include a QR code on the fliers with a link providing more information regarding the meeting.
- Requesting CAC members to disseminate information
- Requesting other community-based organization and county departments to disseminate information.

It is recognized there may be events that can occur unexpectedly, and may generate significant public interest, such as officer involved shootings. Events that are of significant interest and have recently occurred in each area should include an outreach and community forum component. If meetings have been pre-scheduled, this Community Attendance Plan is intended to offer flexibility and afford discretion in the form of altering the type of meeting or scheduling additional meetings to address community concerns surrounding such incidents. KCSO will select the type of meeting to be held that best addresses any community concerns.

For example:

- East Kern – A meeting is set in to hold a community engagement dialogue in Boron. If an officer involved shooting occurred in Mojave before the scheduled meeting, it may be more appropriate to alter the format and/or location to accommodate discussion of recent events in Mojave.

The following may also serve as catalysts for identifying topics of interest and types of meeting to be held:

- Current local community issues, concerns or trends
- Feedback from My90 reports
- Surveys, complaints, or other community feedback that may indicate the need to discuss particular issues (e.g. Issues impacting community relations, transparency, & trust)
- Relationship building with underrecognized groups
- Opportunities in which a collaborative problem-solving effort may be appropriate
- Critical incidents within a response area

III. Meeting Types

KCSO has developed four (4) meeting formats/types. These meeting types are strategically designed to allow flexibility in responding to community concerns, which may vary greatly amongst the sprawling geographic areas throughout Kern County. These types of meeting range in size from large "town hall" type events to discuss critical incidents or solicit feedback on policy, medium-sized meeting to facilitate mutual learning related to particular issues like use of force, to smaller more intimate gatherings to collaborate on problem-oriented policing (POP) projects or to enhance relationships with particular groups. The type of meeting to be held may also depend on the availability of or size of venues in each area.

1. **Fostering Openness and Cultivating Understanding through Successful Engagement & Dialogue (FOCUSED) Meetings – Community Engagement Dialogue**
    - Either format allows KCSO to listen to community concerns, assess overall crime prevention strategies, and engage in dialogue with community to build trust and legitimacy.
    - Topics or themes of dialogue may include 21st Century Policing Pillars – Building Trust & Legitimacy, Policy & Oversight, Technology & Social Media, Community Policing & Crim Reduction, Training & Education, and Officer Wellness & Safety

2. **Community Policing/POP Project Meeting**
    - Allows KCSO to partner with the community to learn from one another about KCSO practices and impacts
    - Allows KCSO to receive feedback from the community on issues affecting their specific community and develop solutions together
    - Allows KCSO to collaborate with the community on ways to address issues raised

3. **Mutual Learning Meeting**

    Multiple Topic Format
    - Allows KCSO and community to learn from one another about specific topics that are of mutual concern
    - Presentation of specific topics with opportunities for discussion.
    - Potential Topics - Use of Force, Complaints, Search & Seizure, Language Access, Recruitment & Promotional Activities, Policies & Training, etc.

    Single Topic Format
    - Allows KCSO inform the public about matter of public concern, such as officer involved shootings, deaths in custody, or other significant matters

4. **Tackling Challenges, Honing Relationships, and Investing in Value Exchange (THRIVE) Meeting**
    - Allows for a more intimate gathering to enhance relationships with underrecognized groups within the community
    - Such groups should include, but is not limited to: Youth, Limited English Proficient (LEP) individuals, members of the LGBTQ+ community, and communities of color.
    - The presence of these groups may vary between different response areas

IV. Expectations

KCSO Personnel

The mission statement of the Kern County Sheriff's Office is in essence community policing in its most basic form. Community meetings are an important opportunity for KCSO members to meet community members residing in the areas they serve outside of the time constraints of stops and calls for service, which are sometimes rapidly unfolding and do not allow for lengthy problem-solving discussions. Active participation in these types of events allow for constructive dialogue, positive interactions, and partnerships to develop, which improves relationships and builds trust. Doing so may also reduce complaints and improve the chances of successful de-escalation efforts in future interactions, and an increase in the willingness of community members to cooperate with investigations. Participation in such meetings also serve as valuable learning opportunities about issues KCSO may not know is occurring and allow for the community to take an active part in developing solutions. Lastly, participation in such efforts is one way for employees to pro-actively better develop themselves for promotional opportunities as outlined in the promotional plan and Ideal Candidate Profile.

All KCSO personnel attending any type of Community Engagement Forum shall employ "active listening" skills and engage constructively with community members. KCSO personnel are expected to engage in discussions and activities with community members. This means personnel shall not attend a meeting and simply stand in the back of the room with their backs to the wall or on their cellular phones. By not being actively involved or engaging with the community will not allow the fostering of building a positive relationship with the community. In addition to the types of meeting held in each area and topics discussed, attendance by KCSO personnel at community meeting/events will be documented on Community Engagement Meeting After Action Reports, as described in Section VI of this Community Engagement Attendance Plan.

All Participants (Including KCSO Personnel)

What makes for successful dialogue?
The nature of the dialogue process can motivate people to work towards change. Effective dialogues do the following:

- *Move discussion away from finger-pointing and towards constructive common action with an emphasis on solutions rather than spending too much time to express or analyze the problem.*
- *Reach beyond the usual boundaries and seek to create new partnerships by listening carefully and respectfully to each other. A search for solutions focuses on the common good and participants are encouraged to broaden their horizons and build relationships outside their comfort zones, and take the opportunity to hear new community concerns, documenting those concerns, and using that information to create possible POP projects.*
- *If applicable, unite divided communities through an honest, respectful, informed sharing of national and local law enforcement history and its consequences for both the community and KCSO in today's society. The experience of "walking through history" together can lead to healing.*
- *Aim for a change of heart, not just a change of mind.*

V. Meeting Structure

The following sections are intended to provide an outline of how to conduct each type of meeting:

Fostering Openness and Cultivating Understanding through Successful Engagement & Dialogue (FOCUSED) Meetings – Community Engagement Dialogue

In order to create a successful dialogue, below are some instructions or general framework for facilitating a

community engagement dialogue meeting. The purpose of this type of meeting is to allow KCSO to engage in dialogue with community to listen to community concerns, assess overall crime prevention strategies, and to build trust and legitimacy.

Facilitator sets the stage for the conversation/brief introductions. During this time the facilitator can pass out any handouts explaining the key processes and meaning to key terms used (e.g., COPs, POP, SAR, E.I.). The facilitator will set the tone of this meeting by providing guidance on the purpose of the community engagement dialogue meeting, what makes dialogue successful. NOTE – Bringing a neutral 3rd party or external professionals (e.g., CAC, community and business leaders) to serve as a facilitator may help alleviate any community tensions. The general concepts described here may also be condensed into welcoming remarks to set the stage for constructive dialogue:

The Facilitator will then outline the parameters to follow. Parameters for this type of meeting includes utilizing emotional intelligence (EI) to promote civility and create a professional atmosphere to give everyone a voice. Emotional intelligence is the ability to perceive, interpret, demonstrate, control, evaluate, and use emotions to communicate with and relate to others effectively and constructively. To aid in this, all participants will be advised to utilize the LEARN model currently utilized by CAC:

L – Listen to other viewpoints and try to view through their "lens"

E – Elicit relevant information and explain your position, while keeping an open mind

A – Assess all stances and the role emotions play, while remaining accommodating

R – Reflect on your own emotions / Refrain from criticizing and show respect when recommending alternative options or simply disagreeing.

N – Negate Negativity / Nourish New Ideas & Newfound Understanding

The facilitator will ask the same set of questions in all types of FOCUSED Meetings regardless of location. Asking the same set of questions and collecting responses in a consistent format will allow data integrity for analysis. This is designed to set a baseline for comparisons to be drawn amongst the various response areas, assessing for differences/commonalities from a broader perspective. Reviewing the same response dimensions across various areas will allow KCSO to assess overall crime prevention strategies. Make sure these questions are answered before meeting is completed. Note: There may be times where members of community that have questions off-topic and not along the lines of the meeting. Have information on what to do (take up the questions later, etc.).

Strive to address all in this type of meeting:

1) *How would you characterize your relationship with law enforcement?*
2) *Why do you feel that way?*
3) *What is working well with KCSO?*
4) *What is not working so well?*
5) *How can we work together to improve?*

The goal of this type of meeting is to encourage dialogue and be flexible to allow for such. After these base set of questions are asked, the following are additional sets of questions that may be asked to stimulate conversation:

1) *What is the most pressing the top (3) three concerns in the community within this area that impacts policing?*

2) *What is the most pressing concern with the KCSO in this area requiring attention?*
3) *If training/policies are a priority, what kind should be prioritized?*

Where any COPS/POPS projects identified?

A scribe collecting and tabulating responses, should make an effort to consolidate recurring themes in a consistent format utilizing 21st Century Policing Pillars. Examples include, but are not limited to:

a) Building Trust & Legitimacy
   - Customer service & Community relations
   - My90 Survey Results

b) Policy & Oversight
   - Accountability measures
   - Policy review & Community feedback

c) Technology & Social Media
   - How KCSO leverages technology for transparency, accountability, engagement, and trust
   - Address community concerns

d) Community Policing & Crime Reduction
   - Diversity & Societal issues (e.g. homelessness, mental health, substance abuse, etc)
   - Problem Solving (POP Projects)

e) Training & Education
   - Training & Resources
   - Community feedback for training

f) Officer Wellness & Safety
   - Tactics (e.g. general tactical response, response time)
   - Staffing & Recruitment Efforts
   -

Community Policing/POP Project Meeting

This type of meeting is centered around identifying specific issues to apply collaborative problem-solving via the SARA model. This also allows KCSO to partner with CAC to inform the community about KCSO processes and practices. The topic for this type of meeting can be based on problems identified in previous meetings, past feedback, crime trends, or complaints. Conversely, this type of meeting can be held specifically to identify any problems or other quality of life issues, which have not been previously addressed.

Facilitator sets the stage for the conversation/brief introductions. The facilitator will set the tone of this meeting by providing guidance on community policing as a problem-solving philosophy, the community's role, and applying the SARA model. This may include providing a briefing of what was discussed at previous meetings and directing participants to any report or handouts containing past progress. This may also entail providing an introduction to what prompted this type of meeting. NOTE – Bringing a neutral 3rd party (e.g. CAC) to serve as a facilitator may help alleviate any community tensions.

Any COP/POP project identified in the meeting will be documented on the community engagement after action reports, as described in Section VI of this community attendance plan. Efforts shall be taken to partner with community members in solving the identified problem and logging those efforts in the COPS/POP log, as outlined in the community policing policy and strategic plan.

Mutual Learning Meeting

The goal of this type of meeting is to educate the community to improve understanding of elements impacting

policing and for KCSO personnel to hear the community's perspectives and input, including inclusive opportunity for community feedback on specific police policies and practices. These meetings may be offered in two formats, depending on the complexity of the topic and/or the size of the venue.

Multiple Topic Format

Facilitator sets the stage for the conversation/brief introductions. This may include providing a briefing of what was discussed at previous meetings and directing participants to any report or handouts containing past progress. If done in a breakout session format, the facilitator will assign community into smaller groups and explain the format of the meeting. The Facilitator will also serve as the timekeeper and direct each group in when to rotate to the next station.

This format allows KCSO and the community to learn from one another about specific topics that are of mutual concern. KCSO will designate subject matter experts to present information on specific topics at different stations with opportunities for discussion. Potential topics may include but are not limited to:

- Use of Force
- Complaints
- Search & Seizure
- Language Access
- Recruitment
- Policies

KCSO subject matter experts from relevant units at each station may be comprised of representatives' form command staff, internal affairs, detectives, training, etc.

Community members will divide into groups to engage in dialogue with KCSO personnel at each station. After 15-20 minutes at a station all groups will rotate. Groups will rotate until every station is visited.

Single Topic Format

Facilitator sets the stage for the conversation/brief introductions. This may include providing a briefing of what was discussed at previous meetings and directing participants to any report or handouts containing past progress. This may also entail providing an introduction to what prompted this type of meeting. NOTE – Bringing a neutral 3rd party (e.g. CAC) to serve as a facilitator may help alleviate any community tensions.

This meeting format allows for KCSO to inform the public and hear community questions and feedback about all officer involved shootings (OIS), deaths in-custody, or other significant matters. Although the details of the investigation may not be able to be fully released, a meeting of this nature allows KCSO to provide transparency to the community on enforcement actions taken and answer any questions around the "Why's?" of the process to the extent allowed. Thing that may be discussed may include, but are not limited to:

- Provide briefing over circumstances and answer questions to extent allowed
- Describe investigative process
- Describe public safety officer procedural bill of rights (POBR) and any due process
- Describe process of critical incident review
- May include history/totals of similar incidents in respective area for the year
- Refer to transparency page for statistics related to in-custody deaths and OIS

Providing as much transparency as possible may assist the community with understanding how KCSO operates and the accountability systems in place. The following questions may also be answered and discussed:

- What is the current internal process for accountability?
- What kind of discipline data exists that can be shared with the public to show the number of officers disciplined and fired in the past and for what behaviors?
- How do you ensure a fair and impartial process with safeguards against conflicts of interest (such as officers investigating their colleagues, or any other conflicts of interest)?
- What are the current challenges in internal accountability? How are they being addressed?
- What kind of post-critical incident protocols exist to ensure the integrity of an investigation?
- Are there any issues with those protocols and have they been addressed?
- What kind of internal data is currently being captured demographics to both show who is being hired and promoted inside the department?
- What kind of external data is currently being captured on demographics to show who is being detained or arrested and for what behavior?
- How is this data being analyzed and used to improve the department?
- What are current data capture challenges and how are they being addressed?
- Who is managing the data, analyzing it, and what happens to the data or the results?
- Does the department utilize early intervention systems (EIS)?

Tackling Challenges, Honing Relationships, and Investing in Value Exchange (THRIVE)

These types of meetings allow for a more intimate gathering to enhance relationships with underrecognized groups within the community. Such groups should include, but is not limited to youth, limited English proficient (LEP) individuals, members of the LGBTQ+ community, and communities of color. This presence of these groups may vary between different response areas. To facilitate rapport and reduce any apprehension, these meeting will generally be limited to smaller venues with only one particular group per meeting. Unless currently on-duty in an assignment where a uniform is required, KCSO personnel attending will with wear business casual clothing or KCSO Polo. This approach is to reduce any sense of intimidation and better assist with breaking down the barriers or reducing tensions that may exist with these groups.

Facilitator sets the stage for the conversation/brief introductions. This may include providing a briefing of what was discussed at previous meetings and directing participants to any report or handouts containing past progress. This may also entail providing an introduction to what prompted this type of meeting. NOTE – Bringing a neutral 3rd party (e.g. CAC) to serve as a facilitator may help alleviate any community tensions.

Asking open-ended questions may help in capturing the needs and concerns of participants in each of these unique groups. The following are sets of questions that can be used to facilitate a meeting of this nature, which is focused on honing relationships and exchanging valuable experiences with one another to build trust. There is not a need to get through all questions, as strict adherence to a list within a prescribed time period may stifle dialogue. The goal of this type of meeting is to encourage dialogue and be flexible to allow for such.

1) *How would you characterize your relationship with law enforcement?*
2) *Why do you feel that way?*
3) *What is working well with KCSO?*
4) *What is not working so well?*
5) *How can we work together to improve?*

VI. After Action

After each meeting, the KCSO facilitator, or their designee, shall complete an After-Action Report (AAR). The

AAU will be completed and sent to PSU within 30 days. PSU will evaluate all AAR and incorporate the information into the community engagement section of the KCSO annual report. PSU will archive all AAR forms.

The AAR Forms shall document the following:

- Summary of the community engagement forum:
  - Date/time
  - Meeting type
  - Location
  - KCSO staff in attendance
  - Number of community members in attendance
  - Topics of discussion
- Results of the community engagement forums?
  - Were there any obstacles identified?
  - Were there any successes identified?
  - Recommendation(s) for improvement?
- Attachments to AAR:
  - Any PowerPoint utilized during the meeting will be converted to PDF and attached
  - Any feedback collected on posters or by a scribe will be consolidated into AAR
  - AAR Form link: http://sharepoint/CB/PSS/PSU/SitePages/Home.aspx
  - If any actionable issues arose, document any efforts taken to address or solve the issue. For example:
    - POP project generated from meeting, actions taken, and results. This will be logged in the COP/POP project log
    - Complaints forwarded to internal affairs
    - Compliments/Commendations forwarded to involved staff

VII. Equipment, Supplies & Resources

In order for each meeting to be successful, advanced planning should include consideration of equipment needs. The equipment needs may vary depending on the type of meeting and the venue. The following is a non-exhaustive list of equipment, supplies, and resources that may be needed:

- Venue – Reserve early / Identify capacity, and any restrictions (e.g. funding, insurance, etc)
- T.V.
- Projector
- Laptop & Connector Cables
- Extension Cords
- Poster board & Easels
- Markers
- Tables/Chairs
- Ice Chests & Drinks
- Snacks & Plates/Utensils
- Stickers, Coloring Books, or Other Items for Children
- Language Interpreters and equipment
- Volunteers from CAC or Community Based Organizations